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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 4 October 1990, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. de MARCO	(Malta)
later:	Mr. FORTIER (Vice-President)	(Canada)

- General debate [9] (continued)

  Statements made by

  Mr. Gros Espiell (Uruguay)
  Mr. Filali (Morocco)
  Mr. Sy (Senegal)
  Mr. Ghali (Egypt)
  Mr. Ndong (Equatorial Guinea)

- Programme of work

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- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Nyakyi (United Republic of Tanzania)
Mr. Nguyen Co Thach (Viet Nam)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GROS ESPIELL (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): Since 1945 - when the United Nations was created in response to the clamour of peoples to preserve future generations from the scourge of war, to strengthen faith in fundamental human rights and to create the proper conditions for international coexistence characterized by greater justice and solidarity, thus laying the foundations for lasting peace - the General Assembly, the principal representative organ of the United Nations, has met each year to carry out, within the scope of its competence, the task of promoting, building and keeping peace. That is the first purpose of the United Nations and our paramount mission.

For that reason, I must begin by referring to the situation that exists today in the Middle East. In these past few months the shadow of war has cast a tragic shadow over the international situation, which until then had seemed to be following a hopeful path. Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait precipitated the crisis that had been developing, and they pushed the world to the verge of an armed conflict of unforeseeable consequences.

The response of the international community, through the Security Council, has been rapid and energetic. Uruguay condemns the grave violation of international law committed by Iraq and fully supports the decisions taken by the Council.

By adopting this attitude, Uruguay is demonstrating once again its unconditional respect for and adherence to international law for the sake of peace, whatever may be the negative consequences for its economy and its development process. We must be fully aware that the aggression committed has already created chaos in the world economy.

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Through the subsequent increase in oil prices, it has brought about a general crisis of extremely serious consequences for the whole of the international community, especially for non-oil-producing countries.

Moreover, we must bear in mind that war would only worsen this crisis and its consequences would be unforeseeable. Considering the characteristics of modern war and - unlike other examples from the past - no State would benefit from it. This is true, dramatically true, in the case of small developing countries with weak and vulnerable economies.

In the specific case of Uruguay its import and export trade has suffered precisely quantifiable damages as a direct consequence of the conflict and of the sanctions adopted. It has therefore sought consultations, as provided for in Article 50 of the Charter.

The Gulf crisis has tested the Organization's ability to face situations that jeopardize peace and security. The United Nations has emerged from this test triumphant and stronger. It has ceased to be held hostage to the rivalries of the cold war, and this fact has allowed the Security Council to adopt resolutions which constitute the most extraordinary demonstration of political co-operation in its 45 years of history.

When Governments - and particularly those of Member States, which as such have greater responsibilities - decide to comply with and enforce the principles of the Charter, the United Nations becomes an appropriate and effective instrument for restoring order, security and law.

The most important achievement of international law is the principle of the prohibition of the use of force by States in their international relations. Only this Organization is entitled to make use of force - within the limits provided in

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the Charter - except with the exception of the provisional authorization granted to States in case of self-defence. It is by the application of this system and by the observance of other fundamental principles of contemporary international law - such as the right of peoples to self-determination, the principle of non-intervention and the sovereign equality of States - that the existence of all States and defence against aggression are ensured.

The Gulf crisis has demonstrated two facts of particular significance: the solidarity of the international community in responding to aggression and its confidence in the international security mechanisms of the United Nations. This reassessment of the current role of the Organization at a time of profound and rapid change, gives us cause for optimism about its future, in spite of the undeniable gravity of the present situation in the Gulf.

The United Nations is by its nature universal. Hence there is need for a process by which all States of the world can become Members of the Organization. In this regard Uruguay welcomes the solution of the question of Namibia and in full participation of Namibia as a Member of the United Nations. We must now focus our attention on the few remaining exceptions to the principle of universality, such as Korea. We are eager to see South Korea, and if possible North Korea as well, admitted to the United Nations.

The admission of Liechtenstein to the Organization is another notable and understandable step in the process towards full universality.

The reunification of Yemen and the reunification of Germany - the latter of which took place yesterday - are praiseworthy events. Considering the consequences it entails, the reunification of Germany must be saluted as a triumph of freedom and the enshrinment of the will of a people.

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The events in the Persian Gulf remind us of the vulnerability of peace when it is not based on a system of international arms limitation and control, with the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. Dividing walls may be torn down; ideological confrontations may be mitigated; borders may be opened to communication and trade, the wings of democracy may fly over and destroy anachronistic authoritarian schemes, but no stable security or lasting peace will be attained as long as gigantic arsenals exist all over the world, ready to be used by any arbitrary and aggressive government.

An armed world, one in which the great and the small furnish themselves with powerful and inhuman instruments of destruction and death, does not provide the proper framework for peace. The events of the Gulf were possible because the States involved thought they were ensuring the effectiveness of their reckless acts through the support of excessive military power, resulting from an uncontrolled arms race.

The international community must avoid the occurrence of similar dangerous situations in the future. That will be possible only if we accelerate the disarmament process. Uruguay understands that the immediate task is to concentrate on further advancing the regulation and limitation of armaments, whether conventional, nuclear, chemical, bacteriological, radiological or space weapons.

The task must be carried out through the launching of new negotiations or acceleration of the current ones, the preparation of new conventions on the subject, the ratification of existing treaties by those States that have not yet done so; the creation of more nuclear-weapon-free zones, and the improvement and strengthening of the existing ones, and the full establishment of zones of peace.

The United Nations is the natural forum for the discussion of problems of disarmament and arms control. Naturally, the super-Powers have the major

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responsibilities in this regard. But there is no doubt that disarmament is a multilateral issue because the actions and the decisions of the super-Powers have an inevitable impact on the rest of the world.

In this context Uruguay attaches great importance to the declaration of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation. It is a first basic step and it must be complemented with a sound legal statute for that region.

At the same time we must undertake the promotion and diversification of procedures for the peaceful settlement of international conflicts. The history of international relations clearly shows that only political and jurisdictional solutions to international problems provide fair and lasting results that are respected by the parties.

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In the last few years many disputes have been settled - or are being settled - by political or diplomatic procedures, with the participation of the United Nations or other intergovernmental organizations. Conflicts such as those in southern Africa, Afghanistan, Central America, Iran-Iraq, Cambodia and Western Sahara have been or are being settled by negotiations based on the application of peaceful procedures.

Together with political and diplomatic procedures, jurisdictional procedures for the settlement of disputes play a very important role. The increase in the number of cases submitted to the International Court of Justice is a very encouraging trend. However, of the 159 States that make up the international community, only 46 have accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court. In this Decade of International Law, Uruguay calls upon all States that have not yet done so to consider the possibility of subscribing to the optional clause in paragraph 2 of Article 36 of the Statute of the Court. It is true that the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 3232 (XXIX) has not had the positive effect expected. Uruguay considers that it has the right to make this appeal since it was the first country in the world to accept unreservedly the compulsory jurisdiction of, first, the Permanent Court of International Justice and, then, the International Court of Justice.

The current political and military conflicts cannot overshadow the fact that, even without them, there are menacing prospects in the present international situation. There are global threats that are not related to political or military issues, but are the result, on the one hand, of the persistence of underdevelopment in vast areas of the world and, on the other, of the fast pace of technological progress that have introduced revolutionary changes in our ways of life and methods of production and have had lethal consequences such as the depletion of natural resources, the degradation of the environment, drug trafficking and terrorism.

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The co-operation of all States is required to combat these new dangers of universal scope.

One of the major challenges is the environmental issue. The international community has increased its awareness of this issue and is ready to react strongly against the ecological dangers to the planet. Uruguay is hopefully awaiting the Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil in 1992, and is committed to participating actively in the work of its preparatory commission as well as in the related actions under way at the international level. We trust that at the 1992 Conference agreements will be reached on strategies and measures to halt and reverse the effects of environmental degradation. Uruguay believes that these strategies, which must be applied immediately and with the firm political resolve required by the gravity of the dangers, must meet the following basic criteria: first, the principle of the inseparability of environmental and development matters; secondly, the principle of fairness in the distribution of responsibilities and burdens, which means that the expenses entailed in the protection of the environment and the restoration of the ecological balance must be borne by each State in accordance with the extent of its participation in the ecological deterioration and with its financial and technological capacities; thirdly, the principle of respect for national sovereignty as understood in international law in a world of interdependence and solidarity; fourthly, the principle of co-operation, which requires a special effort by the industrialized countries since they must provide the developing States with the financial resources and non-polluting technologies which they lack and which are indispensable if they are to face the environmental problems. Without the co-operation of the industrialized countries, the developing countries will be unable to shoulder their responsibilities in regard to protecting the environment, however strong their will to do so.

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Drug trafficking and terrorism, which are closely interrelated, are still taking a tragic toll in destruction and death, violating fundamental human rights, altering the basic principles of civilized coexistence and creating centres of disturbance of international security. To combat these two scourges we must use all possible forms of international co-operation.

While there is deep concern over increasing drug abuse and the immense power of drug traffickers, it is encouraging to see that through international co-operation effective measures are being adopted based on the acceptance of responsibilities by both consumer and producer countries. The latter have launched an open war that has earned deepest admiration and solidarity.

These serious problems cannot be understood nor can a solution to them be found outside the framework of the enormous task the international community must undertake during the last decade of this century, namely, to bridge the immense gap dividing the human family and separating the world of affluence from the world of scarcity and under-development.

It cannot be denied that true peace is not possible in a world that is economically divided. The General Assembly has recognized the priority that must be accorded to reactivating economic growth in the developing countries in order to ensure the right of every human being to live free from hunger, poverty, ignorance, disease and fear. Naturally, each State is responsible for finding its own path to economic prosperity and social progress.

Uruguay is fully aware that the responsibility for its development rests fundamentally on its own efforts. In spite of the obstacles it faces, it has complied with its international obligations in a timely fashion; it has implemented

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painful adjustment policies; and the new Government of President Luis Alberto Lacalle is devoting itself to the task of State reform, with the purpose of reducing bureaucracy and public expenditure and improving the efficiency of State-run services while simultaneously stimulating productive structures. As President Lacalle said when he took office on 1 March last, after an electoral victory that was an example of the traditional and currently sound and stable Uruguayan democracy:

"The Government and the State must be the first to change in order not to become a hindrance and burden to society. The Government, administration and State must resume their condition of being a means to an end, and not ends in themselves. They must readjust their powers so that they are not oppressive; reform their dimensions so that they are not a burden; redefine their functions so that they do not invade the individual's own sphere".

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Uruguay is making efforts to attain a more beneficial position in the world economy through its participation in new programmes of subregional economic integration. It is thus working with the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Chile in order to arrive at an efficient and significant integration with them aimed at the extension and opening of our markets and the improvement of our competitiveness.

The political context of the region could not be more appropriate for this type of undertaking. The complete democratization of the South American subcontinent - an extraordinary process which has not been clearly appreciated from the outside because of similar processes in other regions - was complemented by the establishment of Governments with reforming minds and a modern and dynamic vision of international affairs. The Bush initiative for the Americas proposes a positive road for co-operation between the United States and Latin America. Uruguay is prepared to take that path in the certainty that more equitable relations can be established in the hemisphere through the dialogue that the initiative proposes.

But the efforts of one country would be sterile if the world economic context were to remain unfavourable. The General Assembly recognized the impact of external factors on the developing efforts of each individual country when it stated that the international community is responsible for supporting the efforts of developing countries towards the solution of their economic and social problems by creating a favourable international environment. Undoubtedly, no economic environment is favourable when the participation of developing countries in world trade is hindered by subsidies, restrictions and protectionism, when a large number of Latin American and African countries face an overwhelming foreign debt, when foreign investment has retreated and when the fluctuating, and usually decreasing, price of commodities is unpredictable. Perhaps the clearest example of the

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contradictions in today's international panorama is the massive transfer of resources from the countries that most need capital towards the industrialized countries. This fact stifles all possibilities of growth.

None the less, some encouraging signs can be seen in this hazy panorama. Creditor countries, for instance, have accepted shared responsibility and have recognized that the debt is not merely a financial problem, but also a political one. The issue of foreign debt weighs heavily on many developing countries. Uruguay, in spite of having unfailingly paid its obligations, is no exception.

The world requires a change of attitude on the part of the industrialized countries towards the prevailing international economic order. They hold the key to trade, technology and investments, and consequently it is they who are in a position to facilitate a more equitable incorporation of the developing countries into the world economic system. We are not asking for favours. Developing countries are not a group of beggars; nor do we ask for charity. What we do request is the opening of markets to our products, fair prices, technological co-operation and investment on fair terms.

Four years ago the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) launched the Uruguay Round to face the critical problems that affect international trade. Two years later, the objectives of the Round were ratified in Montreal during a mid-term evaluation.

Last July, however, at the meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee, the highest body of the Round, over which I had the honour to preside, the results were not encouraging. The present status of the negotiations is marked by slow progress and stagnation in highly sensitive areas. If this situation remains unchanged, we shall go to the final meeting of the Round, which is to be held in Brussels next December, with partial and insufficient results.

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This is deemed unacceptable by the developing countries, which stated that the principal industrialized countries did not facilitate negotiations by maintaining their inflexibility on many topics, among which my delegation wishes to place particular emphasis on access to markets and agriculture.

This sector is crucially important for Uruguay. The Cairns Group - of which we are members - has already expressed its conviction that the Round will not succeed unless satisfactory agreements are reached on agricultural matters. This is the position of Uruguay as well. If agricultural negotiations do not succeed, the whole Round will fail. We have no choice. The results of the Round must be consistent with the Declaration of Punta del Este, by which it was launched and through which its objectives were established.

This process must be clear and based on a multilateral consensus that allows for a more equitable commercial system. Uruguay will continue to work towards the ultimate achievement of these goals.

Peace is built day by day. It is built from deep in the hearts of men to become a reality in the life of nations. How could it be built, then, without first promoting the human being, his essential rights, his dignity and values? How can we expect to build peace if human rights and the rights of people are not respected? Therein resides the very origin of every upheaval and of any lack of peace. Respect for and promotion of human rights is, therefore, the inevitable foundation for peace.

As long as somewhere in the world there is no full respect for the dignity of men and women, flesh and blood, body and soul - the main protagonists of the world and its history - as long as apartheid persists, as long as racism persists in its true and accurate sense, without misleadingly stretching its meaning either historically or politically, as long as persecution and discrimination exist, as

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long as political rights are not recognized and enforced and as long as free and periodic elections are not held, it will be impossible to promote the development of man, and economic, social and cultural development will be inconsistent.

I should like to pay a tribute to the work done by the Secretary-General, an eminent Latin American citizen with whom I recently had the honour of co-operating as his Special Representative for the question of Western Sahara. His work during this last year - brilliantly set forth in his report to the General Assembly - has made a remarkable contribution to international peace and security. His work has already obtained successful results in some cases. In others, it has cleared the way by pointing out the applicable principles and criteria for the just and peaceful settlement of conflicts.

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In his inaugural address President Lacalle defined today's world in the following words:

"The world we face today is a world in ferment, a world of change and renewal. Its main characteristic, its motive force, lies in the freedom of the individual and the independence of nations, two terms of the eternal equation of history."

This changing world presents challenges of great historic significance to the United Nations.

The General Assembly held a successful session last year under the presidency of the Ambassador of Nigeria, Joseph Garba, whom it is now my pleasure to congratulate on the performance of his task. This year we must take decisions on many subjects that are as complex as they are important, at a time of serious challenges that call for immediate solutions. The fact that you, Mr. President, have been elected to guide our debates lets us anticipate another successful session. We know your intellectual capacity, your awareness of the international situation, which, together with your sense of justice and your skills in conciliation, will I am sure, enable you to guide our work to a successful conclusion.

In the name of my Government I congratulate you and wish you every success.*

Mr. FILALI (Morocco) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco, I take pleasure to extend to Ambassador de Marco, our congratulations on his unanimous election to the presidency of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

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* Mr. Fortier (Canada), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

I am convinced that his ability and profound knowledge of international issues will lead our deliberations to a successful outcome. I would like to assure him of our full co-operation with him in the performance of his duties, all the more so because our two countries maintain and share common views within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement and in the meetings of the countries of the Mediterranean basin.

I should like also to pay tribute to Ambassador Joseph Garba for the excellent manner in which he conducted the work of the last session and express to the Secretary-General our highest appreciation for his tireless efforts for the settlement of the problems confronting our world and his sustained initiatives to strengthen opportunities for a constructive dialogue between States in the interests of peace and international security and the upholding of the principles of the Charter.

It is also with particular pleasure that we welcome the presence of the delegation of the sister Republic of Yemen after the happy unification which brought back together its two parts.

We would also like to welcome the new State of Namibia on the occasion of its admission to the Organization following a lengthy struggle and we also congratulate the delegation of Liechtenstein on its admission.

This, the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly takes place under extraordinary international circumstances and at the beginning of a historic new era in international relations. It is the first session after the end of the cold war. The threat of nuclear annihilation has receded. Extinction used to threaten a world which was torn apart by ideological antagonisms into two camps.

We now witness a new international situation that has turned upside down the long-established concepts of international relations which prevailed for most of the twentieth century. This was unimaginable only a year ago.

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We cannot but express our profound satisfaction at the emergence of the beginning of a new era of accord that would spare humanity the horror of global destruction, put an end to the bitter struggle between East and West with all its negative repercussions on international relations and usher in a new era of world history.

Notwithstanding, we would be justified in asking whether the positive results that have been achieved on the road of détente between East and West do mean the end of the problems of the overwhelming majority of the world's population and whether the developing world will really benefit from those developments? The question is: will the developing world continue to be on the side lines of international relations?

Such questioning stems from the many fears bred by the mentality which still inspires the conduct of international relations, especially on the economic level. Moreover, problems continue to be dealt with in the same old way.

However, we prefer to be optimistic. In our optimism, we hope that soon there will be a tendency towards economic co-operation and genuine co-ordination between all States of the North and the South and that this co-operation will materialize in the context of a new North-South dialogue which will be given special priority with a view to avoiding the further aggravation of the chronic crises of backwardness and their grave results.

On the other hand, for about a year now, we have been witnessing the emergence of a more prominent United Nations political role which has continued to grow perceptibly in international relations. It even appears that this role is on its way towards the realization of the objectives envisioned by the authors of the Charter at the Conference of San Francisco in 1945. While expressing our satisfaction at this positive development, we believe that, after a half century of its existence, the United Nations system needs a thorough re-examination.

(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

Today's world with its States, peoples, economy, beliefs, interests and priorities, is not the world which adopted the United Nations Charter in 1945. The number of Member States has risen from about 50 to 159; representation, which was initially limited, now embraces almost every corner of our planet. As a result, there have been several new political, economic and social situations and changes to which the United Nations should adjust if it is to function in the modern world and become a genuinely effective Organization. That requires the introduction of comprehensive reforms in the Organization's methods, structures and working procedures.

Who among us does not know that most United Nations resolutions go unheeded and remain neglected, or denies that regular and special General Assembly sessions produce nothing but neatly prepared documents that have no real practical content? That could prejudice the credibility and efficacy of the Organization and exacerbate the critical situations that beset many of the world's regions. Therefore, we are duty-bound to remedy the situation earnestly and decisively so the United Nations may become the living conscience of mankind.

The fact that principal centres of decision-making with a considerable influence on the life of the world's peoples and their political and social well-being operate outside the United Nations system has further weakened the Organization's standing. That is a flagrant contradiction that we should overcome by considering the establishment of a new order taking into account the legitimate interests of the world's population without preference or discrimination.

In recent years, we have been hoping for improvement in the situation of the developing countries, expansion of their economies and a rise in their standards of living and social conditions. We cannot but feel sorry to see developing countries becoming progressively poorer. How can it be otherwise when 11 more States were recently added to the list of least developed countries? All this, in fact, stems

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from an inequitable economic environment that ignores the rights of the developing world.

While Europe experiences fundamental changes which benefit its peoples, and while the prosperity and well-being of the other advanced peoples continue to grow, developing countries are heading towards deeper economic underdevelopment. Notwithstanding the special session of the General Assembly on recovery from the critical economic situation in Africa, that continent sinks deeper into the morass of its economic problems and teeters under the overwhelming burdens of poverty and debt.

Morocco has always believed in the usefulness of constructive dialogue, and its foreign policy has always been pervaded by optimism. It is in this spirit that we hope for a favourable response on the part of the prosperous countries to the legitimate requests of the developing countries. Such a response would reflect the spirit of international détente and the positive impact it should have on the economies of the developed countries.

In the midst of all the problems now facing the world and the world's strivings to find appropriate solutions for them, the Arab Maghreb countries have decided that the best way to face up to the challenges of our time is to act collectively through the establishment of a Maghreb union. The Kingdom of Morocco gives special priority to such common Maghreb action which aims at building a strong Maghreb entity on sound pillars of co-operation and positive, sincere co-ordination in all areas.

There is no need to point out that the strong ties between the countries of the Arab Maghreb are not new. They are centuries-old ties rooted in the soil of a common past. We have always shared the same language, the same religion, the same history and will share the same destiny. More recently, this unity has been strenghthened by a common armed struggle for liberation from the yoke of

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colonialism, a struggle which was aimed, on the political level, at building a united Arab Maghreb.

If all such factors can be viewed as tributaries of the mainstream of Maghreb unity, the current era of major agglomerates requires that countries with close ties, such as the States of the Maghreb, should establish among themselves an integrated community and a system of co-ordination to enable them to face up to the challenges of the age.

The emergence of the Arab Maghreb Union, whose legal foundations and institutions were established in the 1989 Marrakesh Treaty, was necessitated by the interests of the region's peoples at the national and international levels, especially with respect to their relations with the neighbouring States of the European Economic Community (EEC), which are linked to the Arab Maghreb region by close historical and economic ties and important common interests.

We are convinced that the many important accomplishments achieved on the path of this Union will increase and be consolidated thanks to the belief of the Maghreb peoples that political, economic and social progress is dependent on the Union and that their status and prosperity depend on common action.

We have not the slightest doubt that the outcome of this process will reflect positively on the relations of brotherhood and solidarity among the States of the Maghreb. That will be in the interest of their peoples and to the benefit of regional and international peace and security.

Morocco is also closely linked to other parts of the Arab world by strong ties of religion, blood, kinship, history and common destiny. Consequently, being sensitive to any event that takes place in that world, it has always endeavoured to contribute to mapping out a common Arab destiny. It is no surprise, therefore, that Morocco takes great interest in Arab affairs, as witnessed by our hosting of a great many Arab summit and other meetings.

(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

The Arab world is today experiencing one of the gravest and darkest crises in its modern history as a result of the invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi armed forces and the developments that have ensued.

Since the early 1980s, the Arab Gulf region has been in the grip of instability as a result of the Iraq-Iran war and its negative effects on the security of the Gulf. The world breathed easier when, in keeping with Security Council resolution 598 (1988), that war ended on 18 July 1988. The Arab world then began to look with optimism to the re-establishment of security in the region and to a better future in inter-Arab relations.

Throughout that period, Morocco played to the full its positive Arab role which stems from its Arab policy that puts principles over interests and which is motivated by a sincere desire to establish genuine Arab co-operation through an effective solidarity that is free from any political, economic or any other ambition. The late King, His Majesty Mohammed V, summed up the fundamentals of Moroccan Arab policy in these few, eloquent words addressed to the Middle East countries during his visit to Lebanon in 1960: "Our closeness derives from our being far away from each other."

However, calm and peace had no sooner returned to the Gulf region than the situation deteriorated once again as regional relations were darkened by a border dispute between Iraq and Kuwait, to which the Arab States as well as Arab mediators and the countries members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), turned their attention with a view to containing and confining it.

In fact, a partial solution to the dispute was worked out at Geneva within the framework of OPEC. Arab action was then mobilized to find a solution to the remaining aspects of the dispute, in particular at the Jeddah meeting between the two parties on 1 August 1990, which led to an agreement to pursue the dialogue at a later time.

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The Arab world and the international community as a whole were startled by the Iraqi military invasion of the State of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 and by our Iraqi brethren's subsequent annexation of that country.

Morocco, which has always maintained and which continues to have strong fraternal ties with its sister countries of Iraq and Kuwait, and which has maintained relations with them based on mutual respect, cannot but express its regret that this should have happened. Kuwait is a sovereign State, a member of the League of Arab States and of the United Nations. This is, therefore, an inadmissible fait accompli that is contrary to international law - all the more so because our Iraqi brethren did not resort to the ordinary means of settling disputes in dealing with their differences with Kuwait. That is to say, those problems should have been addressed within the framework of the charter of the League of Arab States, through Arab arbitration or mediation.

That action triggered a grave and unprecedented crisis, one that generated among the States of the region a real anxiety about their future, compelled them to take exceptional measures and, in exercise of their sovereignty, to appeal for Arab and foreign help. Subsequently, the Arab world found itself in a very embarrassing deadlock: the problem had acquired international dimensions and foreign naval fleets and armed forces poured into the region.

Morocco is most sincerely eager and hopeful to find a way of reaching agreement between its brethren. We remain convinced that finding an Arab solution is the soundest way to overcome the crisis, for Arab wisdom has in the past succeeded in resolving major crises in the Arab world. Against this backdrop, an Arab mini-summit was held in Rabat on 19 September 1990 between His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan, His Majesty the King of Morocco and His Excellency President Benjedid of Algeria to seek a solution to the crisis.

(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

This was yet another Arab effort to resolve the crisis. In this connection, Morocco wishes to reiterate its readiness to effectively contribute to any effort that aims at finding a peaceful solution to this problem.

If good intentions prevail and the political will is there, we can put an end to this perilous slide towards war by finding a solution based on Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait's territory, respect for international law and the re-institution of the legal Government of Kuwait, while considering the vital interests of both parties. Within such a framework, all legitimate claims could be examined.

On the other hand, we should not ignore the relationship between this crisis and the unstable situation that prevails in the Middle East or the continued turmoil in the region since the end of the Second World War. The region has continued to be the arena of a military and political conflict and a combat area into which, because of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the most modern armaments have been poured from East and West. The present circumstances may provide an opportunity to reflect on appropriate solutions to all Middle East problems and, in the first instance, to the Palestinian question, which, without a prompt and equitable settlement, will continue to be a clutch of time-bombs that are primed to explode and threaten international peace.

More than 23 years have elapsed since Israel occupied the Arab occupied territories. Consistently, throughout that period, the international community and the United Nations have failed, owing to Israel's intransigence, to implement the resolutions they have adopted with a view to bringing that occupation to an end. In this regard, Morocco has exerted countless efforts over the years to contribute to finding a solution to the Middle East problem. In fact, the historic summit of Fez was held on Moroccan soil in 1982. The outcome of that summit was a much lauded practical Arab plan for the settlement of the problem.

(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

That movement towards the desired settlement was strengthened by the historic decision taken by the Palestine National Council in Algiers in 1988 and by the commitments given by the President of the State of Palestine during the meeting of the General Assembly held at Geneva in December of the same year.

Again, the extraordinary Arab summit meeting held at Casablanca last year, reasserted the commitment of the Arab countries to a peaceful settlement on the basis of international law. It also called for the need to convene an international conference on the Middle East with the participation of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, along with all the parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to find solutions on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and all the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

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However, this striving after a settlement has not progressed a single step forward because of the lack of any Israeli political will to move in that direction, Israel's rejection of the very idea of an international conference and its denial of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The situation has been complicated further by the immigration of thousands of Soviet Jews to the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. This has just started and the number of the immigrants is expected to reach 1 million.

One cannot but ask oneself where all these people are going to live and whether it is not the intention of Israel to settle them in the occupied territories at the expense of the legitimate inhabitants and thereby create a new fait accompli on the ground that would obviate the possibility of adopting any proposed solution.

If this new situation continues, its serious consequences could not but trigger a new and major crisis in the Middle East region such as the region has never seen.

In view of all this, it is no wonder that the Palestinian people's intifadah which is about to end its third year, goes on unabated. It expresses the Palestinian people's determination to wrest their inalienable legitimate rights to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent State on their own soil like any other people in the world that has acceded to independence and sovereignty over the past few decades.

Because of the consequences of the Middle East situation, our sister country, Lebanon, became the bloody arena of political and inter-communal splits such as the world has never seen, after having been once a cradle of brotherhood and coexistence between all communities, religions and creeds.

Morocco, as a co-chairman of the Tripartite Committee, is happy to see the Taif accords being implemented. The best proof that the complete and effective

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implementation of the plan and the steps deriving from it are conducive to security, civil peace and national concord in this wounded sister country is embodied in the recent decision by the Lebanese parliament to reform the Lebanese State's structures.

Morocco, being part of Africa, takes great interest in the affairs of that continent and actively contributes to every endeavour to guide its steps and map out its future. During the past session, the continent witnessed a number of significant positive political developments, such as the independence of Namibia, last March. My country welcomed that event and wished the brotherly Namibian people progress and happiness in the exercise of their regained national sovereignty.

Morocco has equally welcomed the recent developments in South Africa towards a new system wherein every trace of apartheid would be eradicated. Those developments were initiated by the release of the militant Nelson Mandela, the lifting of the ban that was imposed on the African National Congress and other political parties and limiting the scope of the emergency laws.

In this regard, Morocco would encourage the Government of President de Klerk in pursuing further the policy of dialogue and reform, provided that policy leads to the eradication of every trace of the apartheid system in South Africa.

Morocco has always been one of the most fervent believers in the virtues of dialogue and the need to search for solutions by peaceful means. Hence, Morocco has been a meeting ground for those who favour the wisdom of exchanging views and mutual understanding between the parties to any conflict. In this context, Morocco cannot but voice its profound satisfaction at the decision of the two sister countries, Libya and Chad, following their recent summit meeting at Rabat, to submit their territorial dispute to the International Court of Justice. In our

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view, it is a wise decision, which Morocco has been advocating for a long time.

We also hope for concord, harmony and national reconciliation in the sister country, Angola. Morocco has worked for this with the agreement of the parties concerned and will continue to work in that direction in the hope that the parties will be able to reach solutions that would ensure unity, progress and prosperity for the people of Angola. This is an end that Morocco will continue to work for.

As for the dispute between Mauritania and Senegal, this is a painful disagreement which deeply touches the Kingdom of Morocco; the parties to the conflict are brothers and friends that have the closest ties with my country, based on a common history or ties of religion, blood and kinship.

From the first day of the dispute, Morocco acted to mitigate its impact on the populations of the two countries with an air lift between the two capitals, Nouakchott and Dakar, to evacuate victims. Moreover, Morocco was the first country to take initiatives to contain the dispute and contribute to finding a speedy and just solution thereto. To this end, it chaired a delegation of the Arab Maghreb Union countries, which tried to contain the conflict and reconcile the two parties.

Despite the difficulties in the way of settlement, Morocco, which has always favoured dialogue and understanding, continues to be ready to play its role anew towards reconciliation and for the return to serenity in the relations between the two sister countries.

Morocco welcomes the positive developments that have taken place recently in Asia, in particular the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, the beginning in the Korean peninsula of a useful dialogue between North and South and the agreement reached in the United Nations Security Council for settling the problem of Cambodia.

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Morocco equally welcomes the return of concord among the Latin American countries, especially those of Central America, since my country might be considered the closest Arab country to Latin America, in view of its historical and cultural ties with the region. Morocco is happy to see Latin America find its way to understanding and progress and declares its willingness to widen the field of co-operation and increase the existing contacts with those countries and their Governments.

Morocco is the closest Arab and African country to Europe. This geographical closeness has always made it necessary for Morocco to follow with great attention what goes on in Europe, especially since many of its fundamental interests are related to that continent.

Therefore, Morocco has been following with the greatest interest the radical changes that have been taking place recently on the political, economic and social levels in Europe. Those are reshaping the history of that continent. In this regard, Morocco welcomes especially the unification of the two Germanies and the commitment of most Eastern European countries to pluralistic democracy and economic freedom.

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Morocco was quick to voice its satisfaction at those developments, and even insisted on consolidating and promoting those developments by contributing to the fund of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development which finances the reconstruction of the economies of those countries.

Morocco has also followed, with great interest, the developments that have been taking place in the European Economic Community (EEC) in the direction of a single market, as a prelude to political union. It goes without saying that Morocco's many significant historical ties with the countries of the EEC justify Morocco's great sensitivity with regard to those developments, which are bringing blessings to the peoples of the EEC, increasing their prosperity and raising their level of development. As a result, there is naturally a situation of improved security, stability and progress for all Europe, and for the north coast of the Mediterranean in particular.

Morocco, which is working to consolidate its relations of friendship, co-operation and good-neighbourliness with its European neighbours, expresses the wish to see the blessings of this prosperity extend to the entire Mediterranean basin from north to south.

One of the items on this session's agenda is the so-called question of Western Sahara. This item, as we know, is directly related to the fundamental interests and destiny of the Kingdom of Morocco. Regardless of those considerations, Morocco has responded to the efforts and good intentions aimed at finding a solution to this conflict within the framework of the United Nations. Therefore, Morocco has agreed in principle to the Secretary-General's proposal, made in August 1988 as part of his good offices, in order to reach a settlement of that problem. After welcoming this initiative, Morocco has pursued the dialogue with the Secretary-General in this regard. Since then, the Secretary-General has visited

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Morocco many times, where he has had constructive and positive discussions. This has helped him to pursue further his efforts. Morroco has spared no effort in facilitating his mission and co-operating sincerely with him in search of a lasting solution to this problem as soon as possible.

In this regard, a new development has taken place recently when the Secretary-General submitted proposals for a practical settlement. On 30 July 1990, His Majesty King Hassan II sent a letter to the Secretary-General clarifying Morocco's position on the proposals. Morocco views the future with great hope and optimism, and remains guided by the same spirit as in the past regarding the creation of the best conditions which would lead to the desired settlement. The delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco wishes to underline, in this forum, Morocco's commitment to a continuing constructive dialogue with the Secretary-General and its readiness to sincerely co-operate with him.

All through the years of this 20th century, mankind has witnessed great events which influenced the quality of life on our planet either positively or negatively. On could therefore say that, as of now, the 20th century, with its good and evil, has virtually ended, and tne thoughts of mankind are beginning to turn towards the 21st century with optimism. It augurs well that everybody is getting ready to welcome the new century with a positive spirit, marked with optimism, in order to face up to the fundamental challenges. That is unavoidable if we are to start the long march towards the happiness of mankind.

The most important of these challenges are the eradication of underdevelopment in the least developed countries, a new upsurge in human development, and ridding contemporary human societies of all the diseases and all the psychological, cultural and moral crises which beset humanity. We continue to hope to be

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able to face up to those challenges in order to create a world that is worthy of mankind and to bequeath to the coming generations a social and moral inheritance and a civilization which matches the unprecedented dazzling scientific and technological achievements of this century.

Mr. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): The delegation of Senegal warmly congratulates the President on his election to guide the work of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. In addition to being a tribute paid to your country for its commitment to peace and justice, this wise choice consecrates his long experience in international affairs and his intellectual, human and moral qualities. It is true that we will have to take up some sizeable challenges during this session, but we are convinced that under his guidance our work will be successful. He may count on the delegation of Senegal to be at his disposal to assist him, to its modest best, as he carries out his difficult mission.

To his illustrious predecessor, Major-General Joseph Garba, Minister of State of Nigeria, I would like to reaffirm my delegation's satisfaction at the effective and skilful manner in which he guided the Assembly's work at its forty-fourth regular session and its sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth special sessions. In so doing, he gave honour to all Africa. Let him find here a renewed expression of my delegation's warm and sincere congratulations.

It is also a pleasure for me to acclaim the constant efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, to promote peace and security everywhere and to give the United Nations a stronger image, that of an Organization is ever stronger and more credible because it is capable of saying what is right and defending the independence and sovereignty of its Members.

I should also like to emphasize and welcome the ever growing universality of our Organization. The presence of Namibia and Liechtenstein in this Assembly, which we acclaim with joy and pride, is yet another dazzling illustration of this.

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Namibia, which today is independent, needs constant support from the international community to solve, inter alia, the problems related to rebuilding its economy and restoring its territorial integrity. Senegal has given it such support, and we have no doubt that the United Nations, which, particularly through the Council for Namibia, played a decisive role in that country's independence process will give it all the desired support.

I should like, finally, to welcome the presence in our midst of reunified Yemen, and to express again our sincerest wishes for the Yemini people's stability and prosperity.

Yesterday, 3 October, a crucial page in post-Second-World-War history was turned. I refer to the peaceful unification of Germany. This historic event - a symbol of success and dynamism - should mark the dawn of a new era where co-operation and understanding will prevail over the old confrontations on our planet.

Thus, the unprecedented joint efforts that have replaced stubborn antagonisms between the super-Powers herald the coming of a new political order. The wind of freedom, which had begun to blow in Eastern Europe during our last session, is now blowing harder and spreading. At the same time, the doors have been opened to solving a large number of regional conflicts, and partly opened to settling certain others.

Today more than ever before we have reason to hope that we shall see the birth of a new world order, in which solutions to conflicts will be found through multilateral diplomacy in the service of our common security.

But, it is merely hope that is involved and not yet reality, because a world of peace, solidarity and justice is not yet here. One might even say that doubt is

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winning over our mind because of the resurgence of nationality problems in one place; the persistence of old conflicts, which continue to elude solution in another place; civil wars and threats of regional conflicts in yet other places. Global peace and collective security remain goals for the attainment of which much effort still needs to be made.

We have just been tragically reminded of this by the events in the Gulf region. There, in defiance of international law and in violation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, one country, Iraq, invaded another, Kuwait, and decided to annex it outright. Senegal, which criticized and condemned this inadmissible act, is already acting in conformity with all the Security Council resolutions, and repeats here its firm commitment to support any other measures taken within the United Nations to end the aggression against the sovereignty and independence of Kuwait, a State with which Senegal is linked by solid, close relations of friendship and co-operation.

Ending this aggression means, at the same time, ensuring the unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops from occupied Kuwait, restoring the legitimate Government of that country, headed by His Highness Emir Sheikh Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and obtaining the immediate release of all foreign hostages.

In the name of the right to self-defence, recognized by the Charter of the United Nations for all Member States, Saudi Arabia is entitled to appeal to the international community to help it defend its sovereignty and its territorial integrity. It was in response to the appeal of that friendly country, with which Senegal has special relations, and in order to join the concert of nations in ensuring respect for law, that President Abdou Diouf decided to send a military contingent to that country.

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It is, moreover, comforting to see that this crisis seems to have strengthened the international community's determination to consolidate and strengthen the still fragile results achieved during these last months, which particularly concern two essential areas: the self-determination of peoples and the respect for and promotion of human rights throughout the world. Consolidating and strengthening these gains means also resolving the age-old conflicts that challenge the establishment of a new political order which is able to promote peace and security throughout the world.

For some conflicts, such as those in Western Sahara and Cambodia, encouraging progress has already been noted towards solutions sponsored by the United Nations. Senegal is honoured to have played a leading role in these two cases, thanks to the confidence regularly shown with regard to Senegal's chairing the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on Kampuchea, and thanks to the initiative of its Head of State, President Abdou Diouf, who, in his capacity as the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had initiated the process for negotiations on Western Sahara in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. I should like to reaffirm that my country is prepared to continue to contribute in every way to the completion of the process under way.

With regard to Cambodia, we welcome the agreement reached in Jakarta on 10 September 1990 to set up a Supreme National Council, and we hope that the parties to the conflict will take this historic opportunity to embark upon the road of national reconciliation.

For other conflicts, such as the one in South Africa, we seem to be at the dawn of a new era, but the foundations of the apartheid system are still in place.

The release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the removal of the ban on political movements including the African National Congress of South Africa and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, the start of a dialogue with a

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view to dismantling apartheid: all these things, it is true, reflect a development that must be encouraged. However, the maintenance of repressive laws, the resort to divisiveness and its corollary, the escalation of violence, which are threats to the pursuit of political dialogue, require constant vigilance on the part of the international community, all countries must ensure that pressure continues to be brought to bear on the South African régime until this process, which has begun, is consolidated and grows in order to lead to the final eradication of the apartheid system.

Senegal, which initiated the decision taken on 24 February by the Council of MinisterS of the OAU to recommend to its member States that they commemorate 11 February of each year as Mandela Day, in recognition of the sacrifices made by this freedom fighter, reaffirms its constant commitment to working for the eradication of this crime against humanity.

In the Korean peninsula, the process of peaceful reunification, which my country has always hoped for, seems to have registered some progress with the recent meeting between the Prime Ministers of North Korea and South Korea. It is our hope that this meeting will be followed up by further meetings so that the Korean peninsula may finally be reunited.

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In that regard and with regard to the question of adequate representation for Korea in our Organization, Senegal reaffirms its commitment to the principle of universality, in keeping with the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

These are conflicts for whose solution we see glimmers of hope, but, to our great regret, there are others that go on and on and get worse. It is so in the case of the question of Palestine, which continues to defy the conscience of the world. My country, which chairs the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, has already, with others, defined the principles that should underlie any draft solution, as well as the framework for a global settlement.

Today, it is our most fervent wish that, in pursuance of the consensus that already exists with regard to the Gulf crisis, the Security Council will take the necessary measures to bring an end to the conflict in the Middle East through restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the convening of an international conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

With regard to Lebanon, where the situation gives rise to deep anguish, we make an urgent appeal that this battered and torn country be allowed to regain its unity without foreign interference.

As for the Cyprus problem, we encourage the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts, with a view to having a plan of action put in place in conformity with Security Council resolution 649 (1990).

In connection with Afghanistan, there is now international consensus in favour of a negotiated solution. All efforts should therefore be directed towards the

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beginning of an internal process that would enable the Afghan people to exercise freely their right to self-determination.

I should like to say a few words about two problems in our region - West Africa. First, there is the civil war that is raging in Liberia, which grieves us terribly. My country deplores this war. The suffering of our brothers, the people of Liberia, has gone on too long. Therefore it is urgent that there be convened a special summit of the Economic Community of West African States, at which all countries in the region would collectively seek a settlement that would permit this brother country to regain its unity and sovereignty, and enable its sons finally to become reconciled and to devote themselves to the rebuilding of its devastated economy. Senegal is working to this end, in the hope that, when the time comes, the international community will spare no effort to assist Liberia.

With respect to our dispute with our neighbour Mauritania, Senegal, through me, reaffirms its determination to work tirelessly for an overall negotiated solution - a solution that would permit, among other things, removal of the obstacles that this unhappy conflict has put in the way of our pursuit of subregional integration. At the same time I repeat our full confidence and our availability with regard to the mediation committee that the Organisation of African Unity has established. This is the spirit that has always guided us in respect of the much-appreciated initiatives of friendly countries.

An approach to the overall problem of international peace and security, if it is to be global, must take into account also equilibrium in the field of development. In this regard, President Abdou Diouf, in 1979, when he was Prime Minister, said:

> "Certainly we feel that all efforts to eliminate hotbeds of tension in the world, to silence guns and to stop fighting are praiseworthy. But we are convinced that even if - and this is something for which we hope deeply - the

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present conflicts were to end tomorrow, the world will still be on the edge of the abyss of war so long as the gap between rich and poor nations, far from diminishing, continues to grow, throwing into irreparable, sisyphean despair so many people who have made laudable efforts to emerge from such a situation."

Eleven years later, those words are still appropriate; never has the economic and social condition of two thirds of mankind caused more disappointment or given rise to more anguished questions or more pessimistic projections. Despite the courageous corrective and restructuring measures and the measures for economic and financial and reorganization that have been taken in recent years by the developing countries, the situation has been especially disturbing during the past decade. The instruments of economic analysis have shown everyone that when growth in the industrialized countries continues, per capita income in Africa and Latin America drops considerably. Add to this the deep, and increasing, suffering of the developing countries at a time when new challenges are emerging, and these things are beyond the bounds of anything we have so far seen in the international community.

But while that situation is of concern to my delegation, more disturbing is the low level of the results achieved from efforts at repair. The three United Nations development decades, which carried so many frustrated hopes, are evidence of this - if evidence were needed. We all know that these promises have not been kept, that expectations still have not been satisfied. At the same time the gap is widening between the developed countries and the developing countries where poverty is an offence to human dignity, and human beings, weakened by sickness and ignorance, and heroically struggling to survive and subsist in an often hostile environment. In this regard, one might recall that, for the first time in the history of mankind, an entire continent - Africa - has seen its living standards

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decreasing for more than 15 years, at a time when the world was at peace. The latest report on the economic sitution in Africa, published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, shows that between 1980 and 1989 per capita income dropped by 1.7 per cent per annum, and commodity prices dropped by 3.1 per cent per annum, whereas unemployment grew four times faster than it had during the 1970s. In fact, many other indicators too show a deterioration. This is especially so in the case of total debt, which now amounts to more than $250 billion - an increase of 10 per cent per annum. In addition, the present crisis in the Gulf gives rise to the risk of a considerable increase in the energy bill of the non-oil-producing countries of Africa.

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It is time therefore to translate into reality the many initiatives and actions already embarked upon to find an appropriate solution to the debt problem. In this sense the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bettino Craxi, recommends bold and laudable approaches.

For its part Africa has already proposed engaging in serious, in-depth joint efforts to prepare as adequately as possible for the holding of an international conference on the external debt of African countries. This proposal, if it is followed up and carried out, could be a first step in the search for overall solutions to the question of the debt of the developing countries. Without any doubt the debt problem is the most serious test of our determination to avoid the errors of the 1980s, of our willingness to make the 1990s a genuine development decade and of our ability to use the dividends of détente for the benefit of all humanity.

More than ever the situation and economic prospects overall require careful consideration and joint action by us all because, as the first Foreign Minister of Senegal said: "The road to universal peace includes economic justice." We must now come up with concrete positive acts. The lessening of tensions must be followed by a redistribution and redeployment of resources. For its part, having become aware that Africa must first count on itself, Africa seeks to find its own resources, creative potential and faculties, the means to meet the challenges of the 1990s, at the three levels of economic, social and political action. It is in this spirit that the Economic Community for Africa (ECA) at the United Nations proposed an African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation (AAFSAP). This is a specifically African step which simultaneously takes account of the different macro- and micro-economic parameters, the social dimension of structural adjustment and the

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long-term objectives and strategies for development. The adoption of the draft treaty establishing the African Economic Community, which is to be signed in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 1991, is also part of this dynamic process.

None the less our actions would be incomplete and insufficient if they were not based on a will to combine our efforts in an economic integration likely to promote interregional exchanges and the complementarity of our economies. Indeed, we need to enhance our regional potential in order to foster the emergence of truly integrated economic groupings. That is why President Abdou Diouf established a ministerial department in charge of African integration and that is why Senegal is actively participating in the work of the so-called Group of 15 at the Summit on South-South Consultation and Co-operation.

Furthermore, Senegal was delighted, as was the last Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), at the "international consensus" which emerged at the Conference on Africa held in July 1990 at Maastricht in the Netherlands. That consensus in substance advocates "sustained African efforts backed by an appropriate and constant external financing" through a "global coalition". That should take into account the long-term nature of the African debt crisis and should regroup Africa, the World Bank and other traditional partners, in the framework of a new international partnership for the coming decade.

The environment requires the reflection and diligent action of the entire community of nations. That is why we place great hopes in the conclusions of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992, which should, inter alia, recommend the mobilization of adequate international assistance for the developing countries, especially those countries in Africa that are most affected by drought and desertification.

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I should like, briefly, to refer to a subject my country considers to be of primary importance - human rights. The exercise of these rights constitutes the very foundation of any system of freedom. In this respect it is reassuring to see that in most parts of the world there is an increasing awareness of the fact that political systems can be stable and viable only if freedom and human dignity are respected.

Events of recent months have demonstrated the importance of freedom of expression in the promotion of the democracy we need in a world of peace and justice, for the establishment of a new political order better able to help us resolve our disputes and to meet the challenges of all types with which we are all confronted. We must now give human rights problems their rightful place in international life. In this context my country would like to encourage the entire community of nations to make the World Campaign for Human Rights launched by the United Nations a resounding success.

I should like to conclude by coming back to my initial comments. The present evolution in international relations may be the harbinger of a new era in which our collective security can be guaranteed by the peaceful means of dialogue and of co-operation. But it could also be the harbinger of a new era of instability if selfishness does not yield to generosity and if the new spirit of understanding and of co-operation among the major Powers of the world is not applied to eliminate injustice, improve economic relations among nations and resolve the many challenges confronting mankind.

These challenges can and must be met. They will be if dialogue, as the means of resolving international disputes, makes headway over confrontation. They will be if, freed from the old antagonisms of the cold war, our world allocates to the

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war on poverty, disease, ignorance and environmental deterioration, the enormous resources thus far devoted to producing the instruments of its own destruction.

The challenges will be met if the remarkable breakthroughs made in the field of human rights protection are strengthened and extended to all peoples of the world. It is in this way and in this way alone that we will be able to make of this last decade of the twentieth century a decade of freedom, peace and progress.

Mr. GHALI (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): First of all, I would like to extend my delegation's and my personal warmest congratulations to the President on his election to the presidency of this important and vital session of the General Assembly. Without a doubt, his personal skills and experience, with which I am quite familiar because of our old friendship, will ensure the success of the work of this session and make it possible to attain the objectives and goals to which we aspire.

I also wish to pay tribute to Mr. Joseph Garba's important role as president of the General Assembly's forty-fourth session.

I also wish to extend my country's congratulations to the people of Yemen on their historic step of unifying Yemen. I also would like to congratulate the people and Government of Liechtenstein on its admission to the membership of our Organization.

The present session is convened at an historic juncture. The unification of the two Germanys is a giant step which may be viewed as one of the most important results of the ending of the cold war. We hope to witness in the near future the unification of the two Koreas, in the interests of the Korean people.

One of the most significant aspects of this session, is that it is being held in the wake of the cold war's ending at a time when détente has begun to prevail in the international community with all that that means in terms of a positive outlook and the ability to respond to the aspirations of peoples and whole communities.

In the view of Egypt's delegation, the ending of the cold war is the most important landmark in international relations at the end of the twentieth century. While we welcome this, we in the third world cannot but feel somewhat apprehensive with regard to the increasing co-operation between East and West. We fear that this new co-operation may be at the expense of the South. I am referring to the

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dangers of the so-called marginalization of the South. This is a tendency that the developed countries should avoid. On the other hand, the developing countries should be wary of it.

None the less, there has been a recent important gain that has profound implications, which I must emphasize here namely, the strengthening of the United Nations and the enhanced credibility of its role. There is no doubt that this forty-fifth session now takes place at a time when the international Organization has enhanced its status and increased its effectiveness. I believe that this will enable the third world countries to play a more effective role in conducting the affairs of the United Nations in favour of an international peace and world security system that would be based on justice and fairness.

If the United Nations has demonstrated recently its focal role in imposing the adherence to the principles of the Charter and the need to resolve international problems by peaceful means, we are all required to ensure that the Organization should continue to play that focal role by showing our solidarity as a world community in standing up to each and every aggression, expansion and violation of the sovereignty and legitimacy of any State Member of the United Nations.

Moreover, the ending of the cold war necessarily will mean significant progress towards disarmament. This is the hope of a humanity that yearns for peace, tranquility and prosperity. It is also an objective that goes hand in hand with Egypt's constant striving to free the Middle East region from all weapons of mass destruction.

Having spoken of aggression, expansion and the violation of the sovereignty and legitimacy of other States, I am duty-bound to speak of the tragic events which began on 2 August 1990, when the Iraqi army invaded the territory of Kuwait. That Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the overthow of its legitimate Government, called to mind

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a sad and bitter period in the history of Europe that led to the outbreak of the Second World War.

It was unfortunate indeed that by its invasion of Kuwait, Iraq should have seen fit to stem the tide of optimism and about the hope in a future wherein nations could look forward to conduct their dealings with each other in line with the dictates of international legitimacy. It did this at a time when the international community had begun to breathe easier and enjoy the first fruits of détente and the collapse of the symbols of ideological and political differences.

The Iraqi occupation of Kuwait comes as a brutal and irrational attempt to vitiate and annul the patient and painstaking strivings by mankind for over half a century to enshrine the principles of legitimacy. It undermines the achievements of sanity and the success of the international will to return to the rule of law and the principles of the United Nations' Charter.

Egypt, which prides itself on its participation in the drafting of the United Nations Charter its membership of the international Organization since its inception and its hosting of the League of Arab States in line with the behests of its role and its commitments, cannot but declare from this rostrum - which represents the very pulse of an international community that is desirous of upholding international legitimacy and international law - Egypt, I repeat, cannot but renew its condemnation of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and reiterate its denunciation of the continuation of that occupation.

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Egypt repeats its call for Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal from the State of Kuwait and the return of its legitimate Government in compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The successive Security Council resolutions concerning the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait provide a good basis for the peaceful option in the settlement of this problem.

When I speak of a peaceful option, I want to stress that the President, Government and people of Egypt want to avoid the consequences and implications of the military option. President Hosni Mubarek's efforts towards a peaceful settlement of this crisis and his sincere appeal to the Iraqi leader to resort to reason and respond to international and regional unanimity in calling for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait, stem from Egypt's sincere desire to find a peaceful solution before it becomes too late and thus spare the region more bloodshed. It is enough that principles and values have been trampled under foot.

Egypt's position of principle in respect of the Gulf crisis is not only consonant with Security Council resolutions, but also bespeaks, quite clearly and altruistically, Egypt's historic and moral responsibilities towards the Arab world. Those responsibilities are not a matter of choice. Rather, they are a form of inescapable historic necessity.

Given the deterioration of the situation and the heightening of tensions in the Gulf, we must never lose sight of another source of tension in the region, namely, Israel's continued occupation of the Arab lands and the increased suffering of the Arab people under that occupation.

Israel would be mistaken if it believed that the Gulf crisis can divert attention from the Palestinian cause, from the intifadah of the Palestinian people or from that people's right to claim its inalienable political rights, especially its right to self-determination.

(Mr. Ghali, Egypt)

Much as it is illogical to link Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and Israel's occupation of Arab lands, and much as it is wrong to make the settlement of the former issue conditional on the settlement of the latter Israel would miscalculate if it were to exploit the Gulf crisis in trying to blot out the Palestinian cause or sweep it into oblivion. We are firmly convinced that the inadmissibility of the acquisition of the lands of others by force is an indivisible principle.

In order for things not to become confused, world public opinion must remain alert to Israel's practices in the occupied Arab territories: collective punishment, demolition of homes, arbitrary measures imposed on the occupied territories, the deportation by force of Palestinian women and their children and the continuing influx of immigrants from the Soviet Union Jews to Israel for settlement in the occupied Arab territories.

It is with pleasure that I extend congratulations to the State of Namibia, which has joined the United Nations. Undoubtedly, this is a valuable addition to the Organization's strength that consolidates its universal nature. With the independence of Namibia and its admission to the United Nations as a full member of the international community, the African continent has achieved a great advance towards complete liberation. There only remains the granting of the full rights of the militant people of South Africa and the dismantling of the apartheid system.

In order to accelerate the tempo of accession to independence by the people of South Africa, I wish to call from this rostrum on the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) to join ranks and unite in their common struggle. We also hope that Nelson Mandela will be able to arrive at a shared position with Mr. Buthelezi towards an end to the violence, co-ordination of positions and the continuation of the liberation struggle.

Notwithstanding certain signs of South Africa's march towards independence,

(Mr. Ghali, Egypt)

the African continent still suffers from an unfavourable international economic situation, in addition to chronic economic problems and the results of natural disasters, such as drought and desertification.

While Egypt welcomes the declared readiness of some developed countries to forgive some bilateral public debts owed by some African countries, especially the least developed among them, it hopes that further effective measures will be taken towards mitigating the burden of the African countries' foreign debts. That burden has been portrayed quite honestly and objectively in the report just referred to by the representative of Senegal which was prepared by Mr. Bettino Craxi, the Secretary-General's personal representative on the world debt problem.

One of the urgent and just demands of the African countries is that the donor countries should adopt a more comprehensive strategy to deal with Africa's official and commercial indebtedness on a consistent basis, without discrimination or distinction between categories of debtor countries, while giving special attention to the needs of the least developed countries. It was on this basis that Egypt actively participated in the United Nations Conference on the problems of the least developed countries, which was held in Paris in September 1990.

(Mr. Ghali, Egypt)

The serious economic problems besetting the third world under the impact of the accelerating international economic changes require, in our view, the intensification of dialogue and co-operation in the South-South context, on the one hand, and between the South and the North, on the other. It was on this basis that the joint initiative by the Heads of State and Government of Egypt, Yugoslavia, Venezuela, Senegal and India was taken, with a view to reactivating dialogue between the North and the South on development issues. The initiative commanded the support of the Ninth Summit of Non-Aligned Countries which was held in Belgrade in September of 1989.

That effort coincided with the initiative of the Group of 15 which was established at the Belgrade Summit of the Non-Aligned Countries in order to reactivate South-South co-operation.

Believing as it does in the importance of strengthening South-South co-operation, Egypt participated in the Summit of the 15 developing countries which was held in Kuala Lumpur in June 1990. That Summit adopted a new strategy. The summit of the same group which is to be held in Caracas in June 1991 will follow up the implementation of that strategy.

In all its actions, Egypt works towards a just peace and the creation of opportunities that would strengthen that peace wherever possible. In effect, the striving for a just peace has always characterized Egypt's policy through the ages. The present phase is no exception. Peace that is based on justice provides the only solid foundation on which we can build the hopes and aspirations of mankind and translate them into realities.

We in Egypt, much as we are surrounded by tensions, anxieties and feelings of injustice and insecurity, hold fast to those hopes and aspirations. The radical changes now taking place in the world have revived the dream of an age of peace as foreseen by the Arab philosopher, Al-Farabi, in his Utopia. These radical changes

(Mr. Ghali, Egypt)

that have been taking place over the past few years and which have now culminated in the lifting of the iron curtain between East and West augur well for all.

However, Egypt notes with concern the continued widening of the gap between the North and the South and the persistence of many chronic conflicts in the South. We are afraid that the iron curtain which in the past separated East from West could now divide the North from the South. This is a prospect that the international community should avoid most resolutely.

Egypt hopes that, with the coming of the twenty-first century, we shall be on the threshold of a world that will be more in keeping with the aspirations of the oppressed peoples, a world of less disparity between its North and its South, less injustice between rich and poor. The countries of the South, even though they do not possess science and technology, do possess a rich heritage of wisdom, civilization, tradition and moral values. This is a heritage which no one, regardless of his degree of prosperity or level of development can ignore.

Let us approach the twenty-first century with the hope that the North and the South will complement each other and not distance themselves from each other. We hope that the gap between the North and the South will shrink, not widen, that their interdependence will become a way of life that cannot be altered. The developed world must understand this, just exactly as the ancient sage understood it when he expressed his surprise at the complementarity of the objects of our balanced material universe: I have long seen the river pour its waters into the sea. And yet, the river has not dried up, nor has the sea overflown its shores.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before calling on the next speaker, I should like to recall that the General Assembly decided that members should not congratulate a speaker in the General Assembly Hall after he has concluded his statement. I have instructions to see to it that this decision is strictly observed this afternoon. The decision was taken for reasons of fairness

(The President)

to all delegations. Therefore, I ask all members to co-operate in observing this explicit decision of the General Assembly.

Mr. NDONG (Equatorial Guinea) (interpretation from Spanish): As the doors of the General Assembly open on the forty-fifth session, the international community is experiencing a time of great concern and tension as it finds itself on the brink of a confrontation which, if it became a war, would have incalculably harmful effects, a situation which is in contrast with the new spirit of understanding and harmony in which the present session of the General Assembly has opened.

It is in this context that, with a sincere spirit and will, the delegation of Equatorial Guinea appears before the Assembly in order to join in the efforts already made to confirm and support the ideals and principles of the United Nations Charter that were enshrined 45 years ago. We regard these ideals and principles as the appropriate way to strengthen international peace, security and stability.

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

Like previous speakers, I wish sincerely to congratulate the President and say how pleased we are at his wise, unanimous election to conduct the proceedings of the forty-fifth session. His skill and dedication combined with the ideals and principles of non-alignment that characterize the country he represents, Malta, ensure the best possible treatment of the important and delicate items on our agenda as well as the success of our work.

We also congratulate the members of the General Committee. We know their experience, skill, and spirit of sacrifice will lead us to decisions and resolutions that not only reaffirm the authority of the provisions of the Charter, but also strengthen the machinery of the entire United Nations system to meet our present needs.

To Ambassador Garba of Nigeria and the other members of the General Committee of the forty-fourth session and subsequent special sessions, we extend sincere congratulations for the competence, seriousness and dedication they demonstrated during their term of office.

To the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, we express profound gratitude for the high sense of responsibility which characterizes him as he meets his commitment to enforce the ideals, principles and authority of the United Nations. For the first time in the history of this Organization, we have had the honour of a visit by the Secretary-General to Equatorial Guinea. This step opens the way to a dialogue which could lead to combined, multilateral efforts for the socio-economic, political and cultural development of Equatorial Guinea. For this gesture, which will be indelible in the minds of the population of Equatorial Guinea, on behalf of His Excellency Obiang-Nguema Mbasogo, President of our Republic, we extend our deepest thanks to the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

The presence of the delegation of independent Namibia here is a source of joy because it is the result of the tireless efforts and sacrifices of Namibians and sincere solidarity on the part of the community of nations.

The recent admission of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the international community is also a source of satisfaction because it is the realization of an ideal expressed 45 years ago.

We also have among us a reunified Yemen and a reunified Germany. This increases our hope and conviction that we are on the way towards a genuine United Nations as we distance ourselves from those outdated behaviours enshrined in treaties and conventions that disregarded the dignity and rights of the person and of the family.

In this context, and in this direction, Equatorial Guinea is pleased at the beginning of a high-level dialogue, the first in approximately 40 years, between North and South Korea with a view to the country's reunification. We hope that in the framework of this necessary and important dialogue, whose common denominator is unification - the expression of the Korean nation - all aspects will be raised and decided through agreement and without foreign intervention until we have the opportunity to see the Korean people well represented here in the world Organization.

Equatorial Guinea is pleased to see the end of the cold war, characterized by the rapprochement between the two super-Powers and the sequel of changes in the course of history, which opens up new horizons of peace, understanding and co-operation on the basis of the principles of freedom and independence.

While we commend the achievements just mentioned - the emergence of the winds of democratic change in Eastern Europe and in Central America, and other changes

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

that have an impact on the complete application of the principle of self-determination and independence of peoples - some clarifications are necessary.

In South Africa, the release of Nelson Mandela has not meant the dismantling of the system of apartheid.

The much-desired and urgent solution to the crisis in the Persian Gulf and the recovery of the State of Kuwait must not overshadow the urgent need to find a fair solution to the Palestinian problem. Equatorial Guinea, while it supports and reaffirms the right of Israel to exist within secure and internationally-recognized borders, regrets having to note that the territories of certain Arab countries, which have the same right to a free and independent existence, remain occupied by Israel, and that the people of Palestine remain homeless. We continue to believe that as long as occupation by force of arms persists in that part of the world it will be difficult to see peace on the horizon for the populations of that region so long afflicted by the horrors of war.

In open and flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, of international law and of international conventions whose provisions have been implemented by the international community for decades, two months ago, Kuwait - a sovereign and independent State, a Member of the United Nations - was invaded and occupied by Iraq, another independent, sovereign State and a Member of this Organization, which, not content with being in flagrant violation of international law and the norms of international coexistence, has gone even further by stripping the Kuwaitis of their nationality on their own territory. Equatorial Guinea rejects this invasion, which was crowned by occupation, and completely supports the Security Council resolutions on the crisis in the Persian Gulf. At the same time we make a firm appeal to Iraq to leave Kuwait unconditionally. In this way, it will respond with gratitude to the United Nations, which in the past expressed support for it when it was occupied by another foreign force.

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

Equatorial Guinea supports and welcomes the positive steps which have been taken in South Africa - the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and the start of direct negotiations between the South African authorites and the leaders of the African National Congress. We recognize the importance of these actions and the courage of the South African President in his choice of a direction quite contrary to that usually followed by the apartheid régime. We therefore hope that the United Nations will closely follow developments in that country with a view to achieving our common objective of a South Africa free from the system of apartheid and headed by a democratically elected Government.

From this rostrum, I appeal to the people and leaders of Liberia to reassess their attitudes and put an end to the fratricidal war which so far has achieved nothing but the unnecessary loss of innocent lives and considerable material damage. This situation is unacceptable, particularly at this critical time of general economic deterioration, and given the widespread natural and man-made phenomena which pose serious dangers for mankind - disease, hunger and illiteracy.

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

In the hope that Liberians can subordinate selfish tribal and other interests to higher national patriotic interests, we praise the efforts made so far by other countries of the subregion with a view to restoring peace in Liberia.

With the same objectives and the same fervour we call upon the Governments of Chad and of Libya to place the higher interests of their subregion and of Africa above national claims and to accept an international solution to the territorial claims the two countries have prosecuted for several decades.

We welcome the positive steps made with the co-operation of the international community in general and the Secretary-General, in particular towards peaceful settlements of the problems of Cambodia and of Afghanistan. We hope final solutions to those problems will reaffirm the sacred principles of the Charter: the restoration of peace, respect for the sovereignty and independence of the countries in question, the right and the freedom of their nationals to return voluntarily to their countries of origin, and the formation of governments and the choice of social, economic and political systems of their choosing on a democratic basis.

Although situated on the opposite shore of the Atlantic, Equatorial Guinea is closely following developments in Latin America, because of a long historical tradition. We welcome the responsibility and realism that are guiding Central American leaders, who now see that sincere and direct dialogue is more powerful than the roar of cannon and machine-guns, and that understanding and co-operation are the most effective way of solving problems and socio-economic disputes.

In contrast to that encouraging picture, we regret to note the persistence of certain hotbeds of tension, where violence continues to be the order of the day. We are convinced that the tireless efforts by leaders in the southern hemisphere of the Americas will lead to peaceful and equitable solutions to the problems behind

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

those hotbeds of violence and of disregard of human rights. Bilateral and subregional treaties and declarations and the restoration and preservation of the identity of Latin American peoples will make a positive contribution to the attainment of these objectives.

Now more than ever, the international community aspires to peace and development, both of which simultaneously constitute cause and effect. But peace and development, while hard to define, can be attained in many and various ways. The urgent need for general and complete disarmament and for an end to the arms race is generally endorsed by the international community. These are the corner-stone of peace and development.

Many inhuman practices have been ended over the centuries as human history has developed. But unfortunately the ancient art of war is still very much on the mind of present generations, which gives rise to the fear and distrust that have motivated the establishment of ideological and military blocs and which impedes the necessary co-operation and improved interdependent relations among peoples and nations.

Now that the cold war has ended, Equatorial Guinea hopes also for an end to the fear and distrust still so evident in the negotiations on the establishment of a new international economic order.

We hope too that, as a hallmark of the new era, the developing countries in general and the least developed among them in particular will have the full support of the international community in reducing the heavy burden of foreign debt and the undervaluing of their commodities, in accordance with the Paris Declaration, the Programme of Action for the 1990s for the benefit of the least developed countries and other bilateral and multilateral instruments adopted previously.

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

Equatorial Guinea is concerned at the deterioration of the environment, because we feel this is a grave threat to human survival. We therefore supported the consensus on the convening in 1992 in Brazil of the World Conference on Environment and Development, and have recently established a national commission to examine natural phenomena in this sphere and their impact on human, animal and plant life.

For the first time in the history of the United Nations, leaders from all continents assembled to discuss a subject of enormous importance, a timeless subject decisive for the future of the human race. I am referring to the recent World Summit for Children. That important and unique event, which gave rise to the formulation and planning of important activities and efforts for the survival, protection and development of the child, was nothing less than a recognition of our own reality, and the payment of a debt to generations past. It committed us to bequeath the results of our work to a future generation that will be able to overcome our difficulties and shortcomings. Equatorial Guinea will soon make a modest contribution to consolidating the instruments adopted for the benefit of the child.

I cannot fail on this occasion to express my profound and sincere thanks to each and every friendly country which, directly or indirectly, has assisted and continues to assist Equatorial Guinea in its complex endeavours to achieve a better Equatorial Guinea. We are equally grateful to the entire United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

and others, for their assistance and their direct contributions to a wide range of development projects with a direct or indirect impact on improving the life of our people.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea sincerely welcomes the results of developments in various parts of the world, which have been propelled by the winds of democracy, and which have resulted in the establishment as a preliminary step of unity, peace and justice as national objectives incorporated in our basic law and set as priorities in the political programme adopted by our people. We are aware of the danger of repeating the same errors, of forgetting the past; any institution or society that is resistant to change - which cannot fail to cause phenomena, in time and in space, that run counter to the will of the people - is doomed to disappear as soon as it appears on the scene.

During the period before its independence, Equatorial Guinea experienced the climate of a multi-party system; for obvious reasons, and although it democratically represented the body of opinion, this unfortunately ended in a struggle for political power and a quest for supremacy based on tribal and ethnic criteria. A few years later, having gained national sovereignty, Equatorial Guinea knew the horrors of a single party system whose be-all and end-all was the sanctification of a cult of personality.

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

Given that sad experience, we now perceive the benefits of a return to a multiparty system as the authentic expression and manifestation of democracy. The fact that Equatorial Guinea still has only one political party is not a contradiction and should not be viewed as unwillingness to allow the popular will to express itself. Rather, it represents a preliminary educational and formative phase for the population to ensure that we do not repeat sorry past experience and that we mature in the process and interplay of democracy. In Equatorial Guinea for the time being there may be only one political party, but it is not a single party.

Thus do we perceive and thus are we implementing human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are legally guaranteed in our basic charter. The recent release of many detainees and the total or partial pardons granted to others on 3 August this year are only two out of many examples of the efforts that are being made to restore the dignity of the human being and achieve respect for human rights and freedoms.

In this connection we regret that the analysis and judgement made with regard to the violation of human rights in certain countries does not make use of legal, equitable and universal criteria. In our opinion the lack of functioning democratic institutions and freedom of the press, information and opinion, although such things are fundamental, is not sufficient grounds to determine that those rights are being violated in a given country unless one can also demonstrate that the country is financially able to maintain such infrastructures.

The people of Equatorial Guinea, aware of their past and their present and of the direction they must take to future prosperity, cannot realize their political goals and full development in isolation from the outside world. In carrying out their political programme they therefore attach a special importance to the implementation of a policy of good-neighbourliness and to the establishment of good

(Mr. Ndong, Equatorial Guinea)

relations with all countries based on principles of equality and mutual respect. We attach great merit to the policy of international co-operation, provided that such co-operation does not restrict our inalienable rights of freedom and sovereignty. This is evidenced by our continued membership in various bodies and our continued ratification of various international conventions.

In conclusion I should like to state that the United Nations was founded in response to the imbalances and imperfections within the societies that existed 45 years ago. Hence the existence of the United Nations, and the lasting confidence placed in it, continues to be functions of the persistence of imbalances and imperfections in certain societies at the present time.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I would like to draw to the attention of members that the General Assembly will take up sub-item (a) of agenda item 17, entitled "Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions" as the last item at its twenty-third plenary meeting, on Friday, 5 October in the afternoon.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. NYAKYI (United Republic of Tanzania): On behalf of my delegation I should like to extend to the President my sincere congratulations on his assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. He brings to his high office a wealth of knowledge and rich experience as an international jurist and seasoned diplomat - qualities that will prove useful during his tenure. In welcoming his election my delegation pledges him its fullest co-operation.

I also wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to his predecessor, Major-General Joseph Garba of Nigeria, for the skill, efficiency and understanding with which he presided over the Assembly at its forty-fourth session. He has

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

reason to be proud of a superb performance, and all of us are indebted to him for what was without question a very productive session under his guidance.

The United Nations has continued to benefit from the wise and dedicated leadership of its Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. He, more than any other single individual, has borne the burden of overseeing the maintenance of international peace and security even when it seemed a thankless task to do so, as was the case with his most recent mission to the Gulf. In the past year we have witnessed his untiring efforts take him to several lands in behalf of peace, conducting delicate negotiations and undertaking very difficult missions. Tanzania wishes to renew its support for the Secretary-General and for the Organization he so well serves.

My delegation is happy to join other delegations in extending to the Principality of Liechtenstein a warm welcome to the family of nations. Its admission brings us a step closer to the ultimate goal of universality in the membership of the Organization.

The eyes of the whole world are quite rightly focused on the latest crisis in the Gulf. There have been few developments in recent years that have so united and galvanized the international community into a common resolve for action as Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait. One reason is clearly that the act that has precipitated the crisis is so out of step with the mood of the times. It is ironic that at a time when relations between the super-Powers have improved dramatically and a new era of co-operation has been ushered in, the world should have been plunged into such a dangerous situation. The invasion and annexation are also an affront to the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and of the peaceful settlement of disputes, which unequivocally rejects the threat or use of force to settle differences between States.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

Tanzania has joined the rest of the world in condemning the invasion and in calling for the unconditional withdrawal of Iraq's forces from Kuwait and the restoration of Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We welcome the speed with which the Security Council has responded to the crisis and wish to reaffirm our belief that sanctions are a proper response to this act of aggression.

As a sequel to the invasion a massive build-up of forces has taken place in the Gulf. Thousands upon thousands of troops from at least a dozen countries are ready to go to war at a moment's notice. Although these troops are said to be there in response to Security Council resolutions, it is clear that they are neither under the United Nations flag and command nor, indeed, under any unified command. That situation, apart from anything else, should be a source of major concern for the international community. Yet even if that major flaw were rectified there is the larger question of war.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

The United Nations was founded in the wake of two major world wars. Its very existence stems from the rejection of war. It cannot condone or sanction war except in the most extreme of situations. The United Nations can sanction or condone war only when it is convinced that everything possible has been done to prevent war and there is absolutely no other option.

War in the Gulf region is not inevitable. It is possible for the international community to pursue a vigorous policy of sanctions while encouraging the search for a peaceful end to the crisis. We therefore welcome recent indications from a number of important quarters that the door to a peaceful end to the crisis has not been closed. The Security Council has a responsibility to follow up these signals, and we urge it to do so. We hope it will find it possible to encourage the Secretary-General to resume his mission for a diplomatic outcome to the crisis. Tanzania is convinced that the international community has not yet crossed the Rubicon. The point of no return in the search for a diplomatic solution to the crisis has not yet been reached.

At this point, it is fitting to welcome the speed with which the Security Council has acted over this matter. It would be most heartening to know that such speed and resolve will be manifested when in the future the Council is confronted with similar threats to peace and security. This has not happened in the case of efforts to enforce the arms embargo against the racist régime in South Africa. The readiness with which the major Western Powers have moved to secure mandatory sanctions by the Security Council is in sharp contrast to their repeated use of the veto to protect that régime. If this is not a case of double standards, what is it?

The Gulf crisis has, unfortunately, distracted attention from the Palestinian question. The plight and suffering of the Palestinian people in the occupied

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

territories, which have never been given the attention they deserve, have now been relegated to the back burner by the present crisis in the region. If the faith, trust and confidence of the Palestinian people in the United Nations and in the solidarity of the international community are to be sustained, we must remain seized of their plight. It therefore remains the responsibility of this Organization to continue the search for a solution for the Palestinian question, which has for so long eluded the international community. In this connection, an international conference on peace in the Middle East should be convened without further delay. The major Powers with influence in the region, particularly the United States, have a major responsibility to see to it that the convening of the conference is not further undermined. The unprecedented unity of purpose demonstrated by the permanent members of the Security Council in response to the Gulf crisis and to other situations should help in the search for a lasting solution for the explosive situation in the Middle East.

The fratricidal conflict in Liberia, which has caused tremendous devastation to human life and property, is a matter of the gravest concern to my delegation. Tanzania has all along encouraged and supported the mediation efforts of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity and its Secretary General and the initiative of the Economic Community of West African States. We appeal to the people of Liberia and the parties to the conflict to come together and agree on future action which will restore peace to Liberia and preserve the unity and territorial integrity of that country.

My delegation is delighted that we have in our midst the delegation of a free and independent Namibia. Namibia's membership in the United Nations is a victory for its Members and the international community as a whole. Another historic

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

victory over colonialism and racism, Namibia's accession to independence on 21 March this year has meant more than the end of a bitter struggle for the people of Namibia. By pushing the frontiers of freedom in Africa to the doorstep of the apartheid régime, it has been a source of inspiration in the struggle against apartheid itself. Namibia is no longer a springboard for the subversion of neighbouring independent African countries. Instead it has now joined hands with Angola, Zambia, Botswana and others in the front line, and in the larger family of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, to build new relationships of co-operation for mutual benefit.

Unfortunately, the hope we all expressed at the start last year of the process in Security Council resolution 435 (1978), that Namibia's independence would help to create a climate conducive to a resolution of the conflict in Angola, has not materialized. Despite the best endeavours of the Angolan Government, the end of the conflict is not yet in sight. Encouraged by the support, both covert and overt, given by the United States and other allies, UNITA remains intransigent. Savimbi has become very adept at moving the goal posts, as evidenced by his attempt to rewrite the Gbadolite Agreement almost as soon as he had appended his signature to it. If his contradictory statements prove anything, it is that Savimbi is not a free agent. External interference thus remains the most serious obstacle to reconciliation and peace in Angola.

External interference applies also to the conflict in Mozambique, which we had hoped would also benefit from the relinquishment by the Pretoria régime of its hold on Namibia. The régime's past involvement with Renamo makes its present denials difficult to believe. What is more, we are dealing with a régime whose track record of respect for the truth we are all too familiar with. In any event, it

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

cannot disclaim responsibility for acts committed from its territory or by its agents, even if it has not sanctioned such activities.

In regard to South Africa itself, we acknowledge that there have been positive developments over the past year. The release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the unbanning of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other political parties and organizations, the lifting of the state of emergency in three out of four provinces and the repeal of some obnoxious pieces of legislatio represent some of the measures which the world community has been demanding for a long time.

We acknowledge also that the talks between the ANC and the Pretoria régime represent an important movement on the part of the régime. In this regard we acknowledge that, unlike his predecessors, De Klerk has demonstrated some political courage. But do not let us dramatize his personal contribution or the achievements of his much vaunted reform programme. The talks with the ANC are no more than "talks about talks". Substantive negotiations have yet to start, and their ultimate goal, as far as the régime is concerned, remains unclear. The other measures are no more than the first tentative steps at the start of a long and arduous journey. The Declaration adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly in December last year laid down five pre-conditions which the régime has to satisfy to prepare the ground for substantive negotiations. As the Secretary-General observed in his report, only one of the five pre-conditons - that is, the one calling for the unbanning of political parties and organizations - has been fully met, and even this has had its positive effects negated by the deliberate application of laws which restrict free speech, movement and assembly.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

The Declaration laid down a two-stage process for the dismantlement of the apartheid system. The first stage entails the creation by the régime of an atmosphere conducive to negotiations. The second stage entails the adoption, again by the régime, of measures which together constitute the "profound and irreversible change" foreseen in the Declaration as a condition for the lifting of sanctions.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

Despite all the talk and optimism generated by the consensus Declaration, we are still at the beginning of stage one of its implementation.

Sanctions were imposed to compel the régime to abandon apartheid. This evil system is buttressed by a body of laws which have become commonly known collectively as the pillars of apartheid. They include the Land Act, the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, the Bantu Education Act, the tricameral parliament legislation and the legislation parcelling up the country into Bantustans. Clearly, no change which leaves this system intact can be described as profound and irreversible.

Thus, it is premature to shower praise on De Klerk, and most unwise and imprudent to reward him. My delegation is therefore heartened by the reaffirmation by the Assembly at its resumed forty-fourth session last month of its commitment to upholding sanctions. We very much hope that those who have broken ranks by relaxing sanctions will reconsider their decision so as to align themselves, not with the oppressor, but with his victims.

There is an additional reason for maintaining sanctions: they have been instrumental in compelling the apartheid régime to accept the principle of negotiations. It is sanctions that, combined with other pressures, have brought the struggle this far, and it is sanctions that will keep Pretoria at the negotiating table. The world community must therefore continue to maintain sanctions and other pressures on the South African régime so as to force the régime to implement the provisions of the United Nations Declaration.

In our resolution adopted a fortnight ago, we all agreed, by consensus, that the escalating violence in Natal and elsewhere traced its roots largely to the continued existence of apartheid, its policies, practices and structures, and that it was also instigated by elements opposed to the democratic transformation of

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

South Africa. We specifically called for effective and impartial action by the security forces, because the evidence implicating the regime's security forces in encouraging and abetting the violence, in order to delay the process, is overwhelming.

The maintenance of law and order is the responsibility of the Pretoria régime. The manner in which it has ignored the calls to intervene to contain the violence puts into question its commitment to put an end to the killings. My delegation hopes that the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other anti-apartheid groups will work together and jointly exert pressure on the régime to put an end to this carnage, but this will only succeed if the South African authorities agree to contain and put an end to Inkatha's acts of violence as well as the acts of violence and lawlessness of the ultra-right elements of the white community which shelter in the police and armed forces.

We are greatly encouraged by the outcome of the efforts of the Secretary-General on the question of Western Sahara, which have resulted in the approval of the peace plan by the Security Council. We are particularly gratified that the plan provides for the holding of a referendum which will enable the people of Western Sahara to determine their future without military constraints. My delegation hopes the Secretary-General will continue to offer his good offices for that objective.

Tanzania is equally encouraged by the improved political situation in Central America. The new spirit of reconciliation and the sense of unity among the countries of the region offer new hope for a future of stability, national unity, and co-operation for the region. We call upon the international community to give whole-hearted support to regional efforts and, above all, to desist from any action that could undermine the implementation of the Esquipulas agreement, which holds so much promise for future relations between the countries of the region.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

We are encouraged by the opening of a dialogue between the leaders of North and South Korea, which we hope will lead to the realization of the desire of the Korean people for the peaceful reunification of their homeland and its eventual admission to the United Nations.

With regard to Cambodia, we hold the widely shared optimism that a solution to the conflict is no longer a distant cry. In this respect, we welcome the agreement on a framework for a comprehensive political settlement based on an enhanced role for the United Nations.

We follow with interest the changes taking place in Eastern Europe, which have so dramatically changed the whole gamut of international relations. Despite all the uncertainties and crises involved, these countries have embarked upon a process of radical transformation and democratization of their societies. We welcome the ending of 45 years of partition of the two Germanys. It is our hope that the reunification of the two States and their replacement in the United Nations by a single Member will strengthen the Organization and provided a new impetus to the United Nations role in the promotion of freedom and justice, the right to self-determination, respect for the principles of the Charter and the maintenance of international peace and security.

We continue to follow closely the bilateral negotiations between the super-Powers on agreements to rid the world of the horrible weapons of mass destruction. We are disappointed that there have been no new agreements after the INF Treaty. We are disappointed that, even after going back on their commitment to a 50 per cent reduction in their strategic arsenals, agreement on the new target of a 30 per cent reduction has not yet been concluded. We are concerned that the major nuclear Powers remain indifferent to the dangers posed by the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons or the export of nuclear-weapon capability to

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

outlaws such as apartheid South Africa, while wasting precious time exerting pressure on countries with neither the desire nor the resources to acquire nuclear-weapon capability. Their reluctance to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty puts into question their commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. A comprehensive test-ban treaty cannot by itself reverse the arms race, but the race cannot be halted without a test ban. For Tanzania, a comprehensive test ban thus remains an objective deserving of the highest priority in the nuclear disarmament negotiation effort.

In a world of multifaceted problems, threats to world peace and security, and hunger and poverty, afflict all mankind. Their impact on the third world assumes immense proportions. The decade of the 1980s has provided all of us with experiences that may enable us to confront the future with a sense of realism. The 1980s were a time when most developing countries experienced stagnant or negative rates of economic growth, and declining real per capita incomes. The improved international political climate has not alleviated the difficult conditions resulting from the debt crisis. The prices of most of their primary commodities are still depressed, and there are no signs of any price improvements in the near future. Protectionist measures by most of the developed countries are on the increase. Unless international co-operation for development is reinvigorated, the 1990s may well turn out to be a decade of frustrated expectations and worsening living standards and social conditions for the majority of the population of the developing world. Nowhere perhaps is this more true than in sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty is widespread.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

A few months ago, the General Assembly met in a special session devoted to international economic co-operation. From this podium, speaker after speaker underscored the fact that for most developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, which includes Tanzania, the 1980s was a lost decade for their development. In contrast, the developed countries and a handful of developing countries enjoyed a prolonged period of steady growth and unprecedented levels of accumulated wealth. While some of the national economic policies might not have been conducive to economic growth and development, the situation was further exacerbated by a very hostile international economic environment brought about by such factors as trade imbalances, inaccessibility to world markets, declining capital flows and external indebtedness.

External indebtedness has had a devastating effect on the economic growth and development of the developing countries. The debt-servicing obligation has threatened the very survival of our people, whose living standards have been continuously deteriorating, threatening the political stability of many countries. The debt crisis has particularly weighed heavily on low-income countries.

All measures undertaken so far to address the debt crisis have aimed at protecting the creditors. This policy has resulted in creditor countries and financiaL institutions refraining from committing additional financial resources to most debtor countries at a time of a continuous net transfer of resources from the developing debtor countries to creditor countries and institutions. Recent initiatives, including the Toronto Initiative and the Brady Plan, have proved inadequate and discriminatory in their application. They should be made available to all debtor countries and should cover all types of debts, including those owed to the multilateral financial institutions. It remains to be seen whether the "Trinidad Terms" have addressed these concerns.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

No one is philosophically opposed to structural adjustment programmes. Their objective, after all, is to promote economic growth and development. Unfortunately, all too often they have imposed unacceptable social costs. It is heartening to see that the need to take special measures to ameliorate the impact of these programmes on the vulnerable sections of the population has now become generally accepted by creditor countries and institutions.

Tanzania accepts that economic growth and development and a sound environmental policy are inseparable. For this reason, it will continue to accord high priority to and actively participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee of the whole for the preparation of the 1992 Environment Conference in Brazil.

In a global economy, interdependence among the developing countries and between the developing and developed countries is a reality that cannot be ignored. The problems I have underlined can be adequately addressed only if co-operation exists among and between the various groups of countries. In this respect, the persisting commodity problems of the developing countries, particularly in Africa, caused by the continued deterioration in their terms of trade, which has resulted in the sharp reduction in the export earnings of these countries, should be accorded high priority. The removal of various protectionist and discriminatory measures in order to allow access to the markets of the developed countries, not only for raw materials, but also for semi-processed and manufactured products from the developing countries, is another priority area. That is why, in the current Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, the developing countries are demanding more liberal and secure conditions of access to the markets of the developed countries for their products. This can be achieved only if tariffs and non-tariff measures, as well as efforts aimed at strengthening multilateral rules, principles and disciplines are all geared towards reducing the

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

possibilities for restriction on, or harassment of, the trade of the developing countries.

The development of the economies of the developing countries, individually or collectively, cannot be achieved under the existing harsh international economic environment. An improved international economic environment is a prerequisite for the development of the world economy. That is why the collapse of the North-South dialogue is such a shame. It is our hope that, besides encouraging South-South co-operation, the report of the South Commission will also help to revive and breathe new life into the North-South dialogue.

The launching of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade will greatly contribute to the realization of a global and balanced world economy that we all aim to achieve. In this regard, Tanzania hopes that the difficulties encountered in the ongoing negotiations on the strategy will soon be overcome.

The mood of the times offers us opportunities as well as challenges. The world is endowed with enough resources to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless - in short, there are enough resources to eliminate poverty. Equally, there is no lack of good ideas about solutions to intractable political problems. Recent events have demonstrated that nothing is insurmountable when there is political will.

Mr. NGUYEN CO THACH (Viet Nam) (interpretation from French): Allow me to congratulate Mr. de Marco on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. I am convinced that by building upon the achievements of his predecessor, he will guide this session to a fruitful outcome.

I should like to express my deep appreciation for the major contribution

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of the Secretary-General to the cause of peace and co-operation among nations.

I wish to extend a warm welcome to Namibia and Liechtenstein which have just joined our ranks.

The most outstanding feature of the world situation today, as has been widely stressed by delegations, consists of the extremely profound and contradictory changes that have taken place throughout the world at an exceptional pace and in a manner unexpected to everyone. These historically unprecedented developments herald still greater changes in the coming decades. The current changes are giving rise to diverging interpretations. Whatever the interpretation, however, the two million years of human history show mankind's constant progress towards peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

(Mr. Nguyen Co Thach, Viet Nam)

There is a unanimous view in this forum that cold-war confrontation is drawing to an end and giving way to a new situation of conflict and co-operation between countries coexisting peacefully. Almost all countries have expressed deep concern about a number of global issues - peace, national independence, human rights, development, the environment, demographic explosion and social matters related to the family and to women and children, as well as the debt burden, unequal economic and trade relations, the drug problem, the rise in crime, and so on. Viet Nam fully shares this common concern and supports legitimate demands in this respect. It will do its utmost to contribute, together with the international community, to the solution of those global issues.

I should like now to touch upon the encouraging developments around the Cambodian issue, which for the past 10 years has been one of the most controversial at the United Nations.

Since 1987 the countries of South-East Asia and the Cambodian parties have been engaging in talks with a view to reaching a peaceful settlement of the Cambodian issue. The two Jakarta Informal Meetings and the talks, in Paris, Bangkok, Jakarta and Tokyo, between Chairman Hun Sen and Prince Sihanouk have provided a broad basis for a comprehensive political settlement. At the Jakarta meetings the countries of the region agreed unanimously on the need to solve the two key issues - namely, the total withdrawal of foreign troops, and the elimination of the genocidal Pol Pot régime. The participants in the two Jakarta Informal Meetings have also called on other countries to commit themselves to respecting Cambodia's independence, neutrality and non-alignment. Chairman Hun Sen and Prince Sihanouk have agreed on the creation of an interim authority based on national reconciliation and the holding of truly free and democratic general elections. In particular, through successive talks in Bangkok, the two sides have

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reached agreement on the establishment of a Supreme National Council, whose 12 members would be equally divided between the two sides. The countries of the region are also unanimously of the view that eventual agreements on Cambodia will have to be guaranteed by an international conference, and their implementation subjected to international control.

On the basis of those agreements, the Paris International Conference on Cambodia was convened in Paris in mid-1989. The Conference, under the co-chairmanship of France and Indonesia, having taken an important step forward in the search for a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian issue, had to be suspended temporarily. However, it will reconvene once the countries concerned and the Cambodian parties have settled their outstanding differences.

The unilateral total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia in September 1989 settled one of the two key questions with regard to solution of the Cambodian issue. This has opened up the way to a comprehensive political settlement.

With the unilateral total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, the Khmer Rouge and its allies nurtured the illusion that they could take advantage of the major shift in the military balance of forces in Cambodia in order to step up their military operations and thereby reverse the situation in that country. There is widespread public concern over the Khmer Rouge's extensive preparations, especially its accumulation of weapons caches that should enable it to wage war for another 7 to 10 years, with the ultimate objective of restoring its genocidal rule.

Since the beginning of 1990 the five permanent members of the Security Council have been actively building upon the very significant results achieved at the two meetings of the regional countries, at the talks between the Cambodian sides, and at the Paris International Conference on Cambodia, as well as upon the major

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efforts made by Australia. The five permanent members have thus succeeded in working out the framework for a comprehensive political solution of the Cambodian issue. Viet Nam greatly appreciates their important contribution.

However, the document of the five permanent members of the Security Council fails to mention the question of the elimination of the genocidal régime in Cambodia. The international community cannot tolerate crimes against humanity; it must uphold the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Moreover, Viet Nam holds that the Charter of the United Nations should be scrupulously respected with regard to matters pertaining to the sovereignty of Cambodia, which is an independent country and a Member of the United Nations.

At the Informal Meeting in Jakarta last September, under the co-chairmanship of Indonesia and France, the Cambodian parties accepted the recommendations of the five permanent members of the Security Council as the framework for a political settlement of the Cambodia issue, and they set up the Supreme National Council. Viet Nam hopes that a delegation from the Supreme National Council will soon legitimately represent Cambodia at the United Nations. The process of setting up the Supreme National Council is a reminder that no action by any external authority or group of countries can take the place of the determined efforts of the Cambodian parties themselves to solve Cambodia's internal problems.

In the course of the past 45 years, the 1954 Geneva International Conference on Indo-China, the 1961-1962 Conference on Laos and the 1973 Paris International Conference on Viet Nam have resulted in the ending of three wars, in the restoration of peace and in recognition of the national rights of the peoples of the Indochinese peninsula. In mid-1989, the Paris International Conference was convened for the purpose of finding a solution to the Cambodian issue. For reasons

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that are known to everyone, all crises on the Indochina peninsula over the past 45 years have been settled outside the framework of the United Nations, but with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

This time we are heartened by the very important contribution of the five permanent members and of the Secretary-General. Nevertheless, in Viet Nam's view it is most auspicious that the settlement of the Cambodian issue, which was started in Paris, should be concluded in Paris. Viet Nam also holds that the participants in the Paris Conference should finalize the international agreement on Cambodia before the end of October, and that the Conference could be reconvened in November or December to adopt and sign it.

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One prominent question of great concern to Viet Nam as well as to the entire world community is the Gulf crisis. Viet Nam holds that this crisis should be solved through peaceful means, within the sphere of the Arab countries and on the basis of respect for the United Nations Charter. For its part, Viet Nam, is complying with Security Council resolution 661 (1990).

After suffering from wars of aggression for the past 45 years, the Vietnamese people, as well as the other peoples of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, earnestly aspire to peace and good relations with all other countries in the world on the basis of mutual respect. It is Viet Nam's hope that a peaceful settlement of the Cambodian issue will open the way towards a new era for the peoples of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, an era of peaceful reconstruction and development, and will help promote co-operation in peaceful coexistence among South-East Asian countries.

Since 1987 Viet Nam has begun a renewal process with a view to transforming its economy from a system of bureaucratic and centralized management based on State subsidies into an economy of commodity production with a socialist orientation. The year 1989 witnessed major changes in the economic, social and political life of Viet Nam. For 15 years our economy had been beset by increasingly serious imbalances between supply and demand, budget revenue and expenditure, monetary quantity and commodities, imports and exports, and so on. The process of reform and restructuring has allowed the gradual restoration of balance within the economy. By the end of 1989 the annual inflation rate had been lowered from about 1,000 per cent down to below 40 per cent; once a country that ranked third in the world among rice importers, Viet Nam had become a rice exporter; and the gap between exports and imports had been very considerably narrowed, with exports boosted from one quarter to three quarters of imports.

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On the other hand, the investment law of Viet Nam introduced in 1988 is one of the most beneficial to foreign investors and has already helped Viet Nam attract more than $1 billion of foreign investment capital. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has positively appraised the bold measures taken by Viet Nam in its process of economic reform and restructuring. The IMF has stated that Viet Nam has fulfilled its commitments to it, and Viet Nam hopes that the IMF will keep its commitment to Viet Nam. Viet Nam is still groping its way at the macro-economic level in converting a highly centralized planned economy into a socialist-oriented market economy. The initial achievements are still modest but the decisive factor is that the renewal process is on the right track and has yielded results beyond our expectations. It is possible to affirm that the policy of all-round renewal has become an irreversible process.

These modest achievements should be appraised bearing in mind the impact of the destruction of 40 years of war on the country's economy and the fact that the renewal process in Viet Nam is taking place in the context of the extremely complex and unexpected developments taking place in the world. These initial achievements in our policy of renewal have laid bare our fundamental errors. Our aim is to build a society for the people. Our error lay in the fact that ours was in practice a society of the State and by the State. The initial success of the renewal process stems from the readjustment of our policy so as effectively to build a society of the people, for the people and by the people. It is clear that a society for the people cannot be of the State and by the State. Obviously the building of a society of the people, by the people and for the people calls for renewal not simply in the economic field but in all spheres, including economic, social, cultural and political.

In tandem with the reform and restructuring of its economy, Viet Nam is undertaking a gradual and steady process of political renewal. Viet Nam is

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determined to take the renewal process forward and at the same time to integrate its economy into the world economy. Viet Nam is resolved to preserve its independence and at the same time to develop relations of friendship and co-operation with all other countries on the basis of mutual respect. Such is the basis of the renewal of Viet Nam's foreign policy, a policy of peace, independence and friendly co-operation with all other countries.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.